

Week of August 26, 2002: MDOT Flash Facts

Topic: Back to School

Monday

The new school year is beginning. Everyone has a role in keeping kids safe on our roads
- drivers; parents; and of course students.

Today-we'll be speaking about safety tips for all motorists.

- Slow down in School Zones and watch for children
- When you see an approaching school bus, be ready to stop, and
- Fully stop your vehicle when school bus lights are flashing. (watch for kids who may be rushing and crossing the street)
- Make sure headlights are on during dusk and dawn hours (children are often going to or returning from school during these times)
- Give yourself an extra margin of safety when weather is bad.
- Use extreme care in any area where children may be present, such as:
 - where there are school safety patrols or crossing guards
 - in school zones and pedestrian crossings
 - where you see bikes or school buses parked
 - near parks and playgrounds
 - residential areas and intersections
 - around parked cars

Like Flash, the MaineDOT Road Model says, "We all need to slow down."

Be a Road Model all through the school year.

Wednesday

Facts/Openers:

Nationwide-Children aged 5-15 make up nearly 30% of pedestrian fatalities.

Tips:

Parents keep your kids from being hurt by following these tips:

- Find the safest route to school with your child
- Make sure your children understand the meaning of traffic signs, signals and crosswalks.
- Teach children to look left-right-and left again before crossing.
- Do not stop or park on crosswalks.
- Do not double park.
- When parking, do not block visibility of children or motorists.
- Leave yourself enough time for the drive so you do not feel rushed on the road.
- Follow the school's rules about loading and unloading passengers.
- Make sure everyone in the vehicle is properly buckled up.
- Use the curb side car door when dropping kids off.

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Friday

Facts/Openers:

- Each Year, about 800 school-aged children are killed in motor-vehicle crashes nationwide during normal school travel hours.
- We all have a role to play in keeping young people safe as schools re-open. Every motorist needs to be looking out for children; parents need to help kids know how to avoid danger; and today's tips are for students.

Tips:

- Cross only at intersections.
Cross only when the pedestrian "walk" sign is lit. If no pedestrian sign is present, cross with the green light, but make sure all traffic is stopped.
- Before starting to cross, stop at the curb or before the edge of the road, get a clear view looking left-right-then left again.
- When crossing the street, make eye contact with the driver and make sure they know you are there. (Again, before starting to cross, stop at the curb or before the edge of the road, get a clear view looking left-right-then left again.)
- Do not cross in between vehicles.
- As you cross, keep looking for vehicles.
- Wear reflective clothing and avoid dark clothing.
- A parked car that is running or has a driver in it may be moving soon, so make sure they know you are crossing.
- Walk, do not run.

School bus safety reminders:

- When the school bus arrives, stay at least 6 feet away from the curb.
- If crossing in front of a bus, make sure you can see the driver and that they can see you.
- Never walk behind a bus.
- If you drop something near a bus, FIRST tell the bus driver. (Never pick it up first, because the driver may not see you.)

Flash, the MaineDOT safety spokesman wants everyone to be a Road Model.